

Abstract

Second generations in the past: the fate of French migrants' children in the Barcelona area at the 17th century

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The population of Catalonia increased from 200.000 in 1553 to 475.000 in 1623. Qualified by historians as *demographic revival* this increase is explained by an extraordinary flow of French migrants starting by the end of the 15th century, accelerating during the 16th, declining quite abruptly with the breaking of the Thirty Years War in 1618 (Nadal; Giralt: 2000), and practically disappearing after the Catalan Revolt of 1640 (Elliot, 1963). An attempt of systematic enumeration through the marriage license register of the Diocese of Barcelona, available at the Barcelona Historical Marriage Database, is presented in a poster at this 10th EPC by Albert Garcia-Soler et al. under the title *Migratory waves of the past. Frenchmen in the Barcelona area at the 16th and 17th centuries*. To give an idea of the impact of this migration flow, consider that among the near 40.000 marriages celebrated from 1581 to 1641 in the 90 parishes of the *Oficialitat de Barcelona*, over 9000 involved a French husband.

The object of our contribution is to analyze the fate of the Frenchmen's children, the second generations of the past, in the sense of their social and occupational promotion.

For this, we will use the data of the Barcelona Historical Marriage Database (BHMD), built with the information contained in the books of marriage licenses (*Llibres d'Esposalles*) conserved at the Archives of the Barcelona Cathedral. The registers offer information about the occupation of the husband and his social status, measured by the amount of the tax paid for the license. For a period of 70 years ending in 1641, the register offers as well the occupation of the respective fathers of groom and bride. In the case of the migrants, there is no reference to their fathers, though, so intergenerational promotion cannot be studied though promotion through marriage can be. On the other side, migrants' children cannot be recognized as such in their marriage license, so in order to identify them we will undertake the first attempt to link individuals of different generations made with the data of the BHMD. We will try to identify the children of the couples married in 1581-1583, French or other, by searching matches in the marriage licenses from 1597 to 1623. The search will be later extended until 1643.

First results

We are presenting here the first results from an experimental linkage made with non-harmonized names and family names, which explains the small number of cases obtained, mostly short and easy names and family names, which are not prone to much variation in spelling. After harmonizing, we expect to expand greatly the number of cases for our final presentation. Nevertheless, as we cannot think of any systematic bias caused by the length or difficulty of names, we will use this first group of matches as a small but representative sample.

In all, we are dealing with 137 fathers, 14 of them French, and 271 children, 41 of them with a French father (17 sons and 24 daughters).

- The fate of the first generation

We are dealing here only with the man married in 1581-1583 who married at least one child.

As it has been said, the migrants occupation and status cannot be compared with that of their fathers because the information is missing.

All of the French migrants married in 1581-1583 paid the lowest license fee, but none was declared poor. Among the non-French, none was poor either, and only 2 paid more than the minimum level.

Compared with the occupation and status of their father in law, 37% are equal, 43% higher and 20% lower. Among the non-French husbands, mostly natives, the proportions are 39%, 29%, and 32%. Thus, the French migrants tend to marry below their level, which is not the case of the other husbands of their cohort. We have established this socio-occupational levels through HISCLASS, considering *medium-skilled workers (7) farmers and fishermen (8) and lower skilled workers (9)*.

Comparing the situation of the French migrants at the moment of their marriage and at the moment of the first marriage of a child, we observe that 40% of the individuals have improved, 28% are at the same level, and 32% have worsened. Among the non-French, only 23% have improved, 57% are at the same level, and 20% worsened.

- The fate of the children

When marrying a daughter a French father has a status lower than the groom's father in 50% of cases, while in the non-French the proportion would be 32%. Compared with the son-in-law the status of the French father is lower only in 27% of cases (21% for the non-French). So, the mobility of the daughters of the French migrants would tend to be upwards.

When marrying a son, only in one case (8%) the bride's father has a higher status than the French father while in the non-French group this happens in 26% of cases.

Compared with the father's status at the moment of the father's marriage, the status at marriage of the sons of the Frenchmen is higher in 50% of cases, equal in 25% and lower in 25%. Compared with the father's status at the moment of the son's marriage, the son status is equal to his father's in 15 cases and higher in 2 cases. In no case the son's status is lower.

We are not extending our comments because we are waiting to have confirmation of the findings through a much larger number of cases. Considered only as an example, the first results presented here illustrate the potentialities of the study.

Quoted Bibliography

Elliot, J. H. (1963): *The revolt of the Catalans. A Study in the Decline of Spain, 1598 – 1640.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nadal, J.; Giralt, E. (2000): *Immigració i redreç. Els francesos a la Catalunya dels segles XVI i XVII.* Vic: Eumo Editorial. [From the original version: *La population catalane de 1553 à 1717. L'emigration française et les autres facteurs de son développement*]